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ABSTRACT

An evaluation was conducted of the implementation of the Federal Class Size Reduction (FCSR) Program in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), California. The evaluation included assessment of the extent to which eighth grade language arts and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes have been reduced to a 20:1 student-teacher ratio during the 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 academic years, the progress of plans to augment the District Reading plan with additional literacy coaches, and progress in addressing the support needs of emergency-permitted teachers who were not currently benefiting from any district programs. Data were collected from various sources, notably school district records. An examination of spring semester 2001 enrollment data showed that roughly 70% of all core English courses are at 20:1 or less, with most remaining classes at or below a 29:1 ration. The 20:1 ratio was also evident for intermediate and advanced ESL classes with remaining classes at or below 29:1. The district was found to be successful in supplying literacy coaches in most schools, but there was less than an exact match between services and teacher needs. A questionnaire administered to a random sample of teachers with emergency permits showed that most teachers find working full time as a new teacher while completing university requirements to be tremendously challenging. The report recommends some ways to meet the needs of these new teachers. (SLD)

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EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERAL CLASS SIZE REDUCTION IN THE LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Executive Summary

The following report describes the results of an implementation evaluation of the Federal Class Size Reduction (FCSR) Program in LAUSD, including the extent to which grade 8 language arts and ESL classes have been reduced to a 20:1 student-to-teacher ratio during the 2000/2001 and 2001/2002 academic years, the progress of plans to augment the District Reading plan with additional literacy coaches, and addressing the support needs of emergency-permitted teachers who currently do not benefit from any district programs.

Class Size Reduction

An examination of Spring Semester 2001 enrollment data for eighth graders showed that roughly 70% of all core English courses are at 20:1 or less with most remaining classes at or below a 29:1 ratio. The 20:1 eighth-grader-to-teacher ratio was true for intermediate and advanced ESL classes with remaining classes at or below 29:1. A different procedure involving a sampling technique has been developed for a similar examination of Spring 2002 data. The results of this analysis will be available in a report to be released in the fall 2002. Data collection and analysis, including classroom observations, for the first phase of the effectiveness evaluation of class size reduction in middle schools is currently underway and will continue through the summer months. Results of these analyses should be available in the fall 2002 report.

Augmentation of the District Reading Plan

A recent report on the evaluation of the District Reading Program indicated that while the district has been successful in supplying literacy coaches in most schools where they are needed, there is less than an exact match between the services coaches generally

provide and the needs of teachers in the primary grades. The report recommended additional professional development for literacy coaches, an effort that could be funded by FCSR monies according to federal guidelines.

Support for Emergency-Permitted Teachers

A questionnaire administered by mail to a random sample of emergency-permitted teachers in the Fall 2001 revealed that most teachers in that population generally find working fulltime as a new teacher while completing university requirements to be tremendously challenging. Difficulty with fitting in university requirements and preparing to pass subject matter examinations such as the MSAT and SSAT were the most common obstacles reported by emergency-permitted teachers. New programs increasing these teachers' knowledge of resources that are available and mentorship programs such as those available to pre-intern teachers are recommended as ways to further assist emergency-permitted teachers to reach their goals to become fully certified.

Introduction

Federal Class Size Reduction began during the Clinton Administration as an effort to raise student achievement on a national level (CDE, 1999). Following a number of proposals made by the White House, the U.S. Congress passed legislation to provide states with funding to be used for class size reduction, specifically in terms of recruiting and hiring teachers as well as enhancement of professional development programs. Congress allocated $1.2 billion from the federal budget for use by school districts in the 1999/2000 academic year, of which California's portion was roughly $129 million. Of that amount, the share of funding that went to the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) was roughly $26.3 million. In anticipation of the 1999/2000 year, the district made plans to use the funding to reduce class sizes for grade 3-4 combinations and eighth grade language arts classes as well as to augment teacher recruitment, professional development programs, and support for emergency-permitted teachers.

Guidelines for Use of Federal Class Size Reduction Funds

The Federal Class Size Reduction (FCSR) funding provided to school districts comes with a number of constraints. The general rule enacted by Congress was that at least 82% of the funding had to be used for recruitment and hiring of teachers, no more than 15% could be used for professional development purposes, and not more than 3% could be used for administrative costs. In addition, once districts had ensured that all classes for kindergarten through grade three had been reduced to an 18:1 ratio, they could opt then to target additional grade levels or spend more than the allocated 15% on professional development programs. Congress also made the stipulation that federal funds could be used only to supplement state-level funding for class size reduction and

not to replace it. At the same time, while districts were allowed to spend the money in a variety of ways, the responsibility to determine which approach had the most positive impact on student achievement, to determine the reasons why that approach is best, and to document and report these findings to the Federal Government was also imposed (this was independent of budget audits and/or other evaluations that might be conducted at the Federal level). It was recommended but not mandated that FCSR programs be integrated with related Federal programs such as Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Eisenhower Professional Development, the Reading Excellence Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and Title II of the Higher Education Act.

Federal Class Size Reduction in LAUSD

The Los Angeles Unified School District began developing plans to access Federal Class Size funding during the 1998-1999 academic year. In June 1999, the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education approved the district's proposal to implement the FCSR program in two phases. In the first phase, the district would follow the rules of FCSR legislation by ensuring that all classes in grades 1-3, including grade 3-4 combinations, are reduced to 20:1 and that all emergency teachers for grades 1-3 be provided with support needed to attain fully credentialed status. Once the first phase was completed, the second phase would be to use remaining funds for the following purposes: 1) to reduce class size in all eighth grade language arts (English and advanced ESL) classes to a 20:1 ratio; 2) to provide customized training to incoming California Class Size Reduction teachers in grades 3-4 combination classes as well as eighth grade; 3) to provide assistance and support for emergency credentialed teachers in kindergarten, grades 4 and 5, and secondary English/advanced ESL; 4) to provide reading coaches to

selected schools needing support for CSR teachers in grades K-3; 5) provide coordination of and support for credentialing programs; and 6) to enhance teacher recruitment activities. The proposal emphasized that the goals of the FCSR program extend beyond mere class size reduction in that quality of teaching as evidenced by teacher expertise was also a major program component.

In May 2000, an LAUSD Board informative stated that during 1999/2000, the district had indeed accomplished its goals to: 1) reduce class sizes to 20:1 in grades K-3, grade 3-4 combinations, and eighth grade language arts classes; 2) provide assistance and support to all grades 1-3 emergency credentialed teachers, including preparation for MSAT and Praxis exams; and 3) expand teacher recruitment practices. In the same informative, it was proposed that the district use anticipated FCSR funding, amounting to roughly $28.6 million, for the following purposes: 1) hiring FCSR teachers for grade 3-4 combinations and eighth grade language arts classes, 2) hiring literacy coaches, 3) Standards Based Promotion professional development, 4) preparation for emergency credentialed teachers, 5) teacher recruitment, and 6) program evaluation.

The district made it a top priority to: 1) target eighth grade language arts classes during the upcoming year, 2) augment professional development in literacy instruction, and 3) provide additional support to non-credentialed teachers. FCSR program management emphasized that the main program goals were to reduce eighth grade language arts class sizes to 20:1 and to hire literacy coaches as a means of support to CSR teachers in primary grades. An additional goal was to develop support systems for emergency-permitted teachers receiving no other district or university support.

Specific Program Goals

Class Size Reduction in Eighth Grade Language Arts

Early ideas to further reduce K-3 classrooms from a 20:1 ratio to an 18:1 ratio were rejected based on space limitations and probable costs associated with increasing the number of teachers required to do so. The district opted instead to target grade 3-4 combination classrooms as a way of reducing class sizes for all third graders while including only the fourth-graders that were in combination classrooms, a task that could not be accomplished with state funding since fourth-graders were not covered in the legislation. Secondly, LAUSD targeted eighth-grade language arts classrooms for three reasons: 1) ninth grade language arts and some ninth grade math classrooms had been targeted for reduction through state-level programs, and it made sense to augment those programs by reducing class sizes for eighth-graders as well; 2) a number of critical tests are administered during eighth grade, including high school competency exams, and it was perceived by administrators that smaller class sizes might benefit eighth graders as they prepare for these exams; and 3) eighth grade is a critical period in terms of identifying students that are in need of Intensive Academic Support[1].

Augmentation of Literacy Instruction for Primary Grades

The district has placed major emphases on the improvement of instruction in literacy during the past several years in the form of the K-3 District Reading Plan (DRP).[2] Implementation of this plan began in July 2000. An important aspect of the reading plan

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[1] For detailed information on the implementation of Intensive Academic Support programs, please see the report on the Evaluation of Standards Based Promotion available at http://perb-web.lausd.k12.ca.us.

[2] For information on evaluation of the District Reading Plan, please access the Projects page on the PERB website: perb-web.lauds.k12.ca.us.

is the use of teaching professionals having expertise in reading instruction, referred to as literacy coaches, who provide support to primary grade teachers by sharing techniques effective for teaching literacy, demonstrating strategies to tailor instruction to individual student needs, and assisting with frequent assessment of students' progress in reading ability. The coaches are recruited centrally as well as through local districts by officials in the Elementary Instructional Support Services Branch and assigned individually to a maximum of two elementary school sites. There they have the ability to observe teaching practices in reading as well as the response of individual students at an in-depth level.

Funds provided by the Federal Class Size Reduction program enable DRP officials to provide literacy coaches at school sites where they otherwise might not be available (i.e., non-Title I schools). The goal of DRP for the 2000-2001 academic year was to provide a total of roughly 300 literacy coaches to the collective local districts, a goal that has been inhibited only by the lack of qualified individuals to fill the positions in some local districts. Recent administrative developments have granted DRP officials greater flexibility with respect to increasing the appeal of the coaching positions to qualified individuals. This series of events has allowed the district to provide the numbers of coaches needed to reach its goal of supporting literacy instruction.

A review of DRP documentation indicating the number of coaches required by local districts and the number of coaches currently filling the necessary positions affirms that the district has been reasonably successful in hiring the appropriate numbers of literacy coaches to fulfill its goals for 2000/2001. Officials in the DRP office are now making plans to use literacy coaches in grades 3 through 5 during the upcoming year. The next step for evaluators at this point would be to probe the effectiveness of using literacy

coaches as part of augmenting reading instruction in LAUSD, a task that is already being addressed by PERB evaluators.[2]

Assisting and Supporting Non-Credentialed Teachers

Currently, the only known program offered by LAUSD to support provisional status teachers is through a state-funded program authorized by California Assembly Bill 351 (Scott) called the Pre-Internship (PI) Program. The legislation leading to this program's development contended that school districts are faced with increasing percentages of teachers not holding full credentials, largely due to State-funded class size reduction programs; additionally, these teachers often go directly into the classroom without having adequate preparation or support simply because districts are not sufficiently funded to provide it. The LAUSD proposal to develop the PI Program argues that the main obstacle of some 8,000 teachers hired by LAUSD with emergency permits over the past several years has been failure to demonstrate mastery of appropriate subject areas by passing the MSAT, PRAXIS, or SSAT exams. The program helps to solve this problem by providing a fixed number of hours of pedagogy/exam preparation training as well as mentoring/coaching for teachers holding a pre-intern certificate in lieu of an emergency permit.

Pre-Intern program officials are working to provide similar services to provisional status teachers that are not currently part of the PI program, namely those teaching with emergency permits; this effort is funded in part by FCSR monies and thus constitutes an endeavor on the part of the district to assist/support provisional status teachers aiming to attain full credential status. Unknown is the proportion of this population aiming to become fully credentialed and seeking assistance in doing so. Moreover, it is not known

what percentage of that population is aware of or takes advantage of services that could be made available to them.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide the overall project to evaluate FCSR in the LAUSD:

Implementation

1. To what degree has the district been successful in implementing its Federal Class Size Reduction goals for 2000/2001, specifically:
    a. to reduce all eighth grade language arts classrooms to a 20:1 ratio by Spring 2001,
    b. to assist emergency credentialed teachers in moving toward full credential status?

Effectiveness

2. To what extent does the quality of instructional practice vary within and across classes of large and small sizes?
3. How do individual students vary in achievement-related outcomes given different patterns of exposure to reduced class size? How does student achievement vary with teaching credential status and/or teacher access to literacy coaches?
4. How successful are programs designed to assist and support emergency credentialed teachers in meeting the needs of this population?

Reducing Class Sizes: Analyses and Findings

Spring 2001 Classes

Enrollment data were gathered from the Student Information System (SIS) for students who were in the eighth grade during Spring 2001. These data were aggregated by core English class period and by teacher so that a teacher-to-student ratio could be calculated for each core eighth grade language arts class in the district. Class sizes then were categorized to reflect groupings of classes with fewer than 11 students, 11 to 20 students, 21 to 29 students, 30 to 39 students, and 40 students and over. Analysis of tabulations shows that roughly 70% of classes in Spring 2001 were at or below a 20:1 eighth-grader-to-teacher ratio across the district. The remaining 30% of classes had between 21 and 29 students. This pattern was consistent across local districts, with the exception of District G where roughly 74% of classes were at or below the expected ratio, 24% were between 21 and 29 students, and 2% were at 30 or more students.

A similar procedure was used to estimate class sizes for advanced ESL classes for district eighth-graders in the same semester. Examination of class size tabulations shows that roughly 85% of all advanced ESL classes (including Advanced ESL 3 and 4, Course ID = 170105 and 170106, respectively) were at or below the 20:1 eighth-grader-to-teacher ratio, the remaining 15% of classes having between 21 and 29 eighth-graders, in Spring 2001. Unlike general English classes of which roughly 15% were estimated to have fewer than 11 eighth-graders district-wide, the percentage of ESL courses with similarly estimated class sizes was roughly 50%.

Spring 2002 Classes

While the approach discussed thus far allowed us to get a preliminary idea of the extent to which class sizes have been reduced, it is limited in what it can tell us. Most importantly, the analysis was limited to students who were in grade 8 during Spring 2001. Therefore, while it can be assumed that most of the class sizes were accurate since the courses identified mainly consisted of eighth grade students, information on non-eighth graders in the classes is not available; thus, class sizes for the courses identified generally are underestimates. This would be especially true for ESL classes, given that enrollment in ESL courses is not entirely dependent on the grade level of the student. Furthermore, enrollment data do not reflect attendance patterns; although students are enrolled in a course does not mean that they are actually present and interacting with the teacher on most days of the semester. Ultimately, while we know the ratio of eighth-graders to teachers, we do not know the exact number of students a teacher must work with at a given time.

For these reasons, a different approach is being used to examine class-size in the Spring 2002. First, enrollment data will be extracted for a sample of schools, as opposed to all District schools, allowing researchers to extract more in-depth information about the classes under examination. Second, enrollment in the given courses will be tallied for all students and not restricted to eighth-graders, allowing us to have a more accurate representation of the number of students enrolled in each course. Third, similar tallies will be taken for sixth and seventh grade English classes for comparison purposes. Fourth, PERB has begun collecting classroom observation data as the first step in the evaluation of the impact of the FCSR program. As teachers are selected for participation

in the study, up-to-date active[3] enrollment numbers are noted for each class the teacher teaches under the target course number. Observers collecting data for the first phase of the effectiveness evaluation count the numbers of students present in each class observed.

These steps should allow for more accurate estimates of the district's progress in reducing enrollment in 8th grade English and advanced ESL classrooms. It also should allow us to have a clearer idea of the number of students with whom teachers typically must interact in a given lesson. A report on the results of these analyses should be available in the early fall 2002.

Augmenting the District Reading Plan: Analyses and Findings

Information provided by the evaluation of the District Reading Plan (DRP)[4] offers a descriptive picture of current literacy coach use in the District. According to a recent report, most of the schools in the DRP sample were making use of literacy coaches, corroborating findings from interviews with DRP staff indicating that the District has been reasonably successful in filling necessary literacy coach positions. However, according to surveys of teachers involved in the study, the role played by literacy coaches is primarily as a resource for information about how properly to implement Open Court and Success for All programs. Teachers generally didn't view coaches as a source of support for dealing with students who require one-on-one instruction in literacy. The DRP evaluation recommends additional professional development for literacy coaches

[3] Active enrollment is listed by schools on their enrollment reports and takes into account students that have dropped or transferred; thus, the number is a closer approximation to that which teachers have on their roster from day to day.

[4] To obtain a copy of the most recent report on the Evaluation of the District Reading Plan, contact Deborah Oliver at doliver@lausd.k12.ca.us.

that target areas where teachers say they need specific forms of help (i.e., providing improved literacy instruction to English Language Learners). Funding of this type of professional development would be an acceptable use of FCSR monies according to Federal guidelines.

Providing Support to Non-Credentialed Teachers: Analyses and Findings

Personnel information was examined for 34,259 teachers working in the LAUSD during the fall 2001. Of these teachers, 8,497 (about 22% of the total LAUSD teacher population) are listed as working under provisional status. This figure includes teachers who are part of the state's Pre-Intern Program (3,213 teachers) as well as emergency-permitted teachers (5,284 teachers). A random sample of 300 teachers was drawn from the latter group of emergency-permitted teachers for the current investigation. Roughly 37% of the teachers in both the overall population and the sample were male; roughly 45% were Latino, 28% white, 17% white, and the number of Asian teachers ranged from 6% (population) to 8% (sample).

A two-page questionnaire including items designed to assess how emergency-permitted teachers came to be teachers at LAUSD, progress they have made toward becoming fully credentialed, specific assistance and support they have received, and additional needs for assistance and support was administered by school mail to each of the teachers in the sample. One teacher actively declined to participate and four others were unreachable because they had transferred out of the schools where they had been working. Following a rigorous campaign to encourage participation (two reminder postcards and an additional questionnaire were mailed at strategic points in time to non-

respondents), completed questionnaires were returned by 146 participants, resulting in a response rate of 50%.

About these teachers. The population under study is unique in that it includes only teachers who have not yet become credentialed and who do not currently benefit from any district programs designed to support non-credentialed teachers. As stated above, over 5,000 LAUSD teachers fell into this category. A primary goal of the current study was to find out some of the main reasons why this group chose teaching as a profession, the nature of their experiences so far, and where they see themselves heading in the near future. Thus, initial analyses performed focused on items that describe the population.

The various types of teachers in the district (i.e., elementary, secondary, and special education) are represented fairly evenly in the sample of respondents; roughly 46% were elementary teachers, 28% were secondary, and 26% special education. Within secondary teachers, roughly 40% classified themselves as math or science teachers, about a quarter classified themselves as English or social science teachers, and 13% Physical Education teachers. The remaining teachers taught either a foreign language, a class in the media or arts, or a combination of subjects (e.g., both English and Math).

The questionnaire included an open-ended item asking respondents to offer their main reasons for having chosen teaching as a profession. Thematic analysis of the responses showed that a majority of the teachers (55%) wanted a profession that allowed them to work with children. An additional 16% indicated that they felt teaching would allow them to make a difference in society, while another 13% said that they taught mainly for the mere joy of teaching or because they believed teaching to be a rewarding profession in general. The tone of these responses generally suggested a strong passion

for teaching among respondents, for example, one respondents said "I got hooked - it's like a bug hit me and I'm incurable of this wonderful thing - teaching!" A handful (just under 5%) of teachers gave reasons that were of a more practical nature; for example one teacher said that he went into teaching because "It's not labor and easier on my back."

Respondents were asked to choose one of two statements that best reflected how they perceived their careers as teachers. Roughly 75% of the teachers reported that they perceived themselves as having a long and stable careers as a teacher, while the remaining 25% said they saw their careers likely going in other directions. There were no differences among those who viewed teaching as a long-term career and those who viewed it as temporary on general level of problems encountered with attaining credentials ($\chi^2 = 5.02$, NS).

Barriers to attaining credentials. The first step in analyzing support needs of non-credentialed teachers was to determine the degree to which they felt inhibited toward becoming fully credentialed. Importantly, if most teachers felt that obtaining their credentials were not a problem, then finding ways to assist them in overcoming barriers to their progress would not be a valuable use of district resources. All teachers responded to the opening item of the questionnaire, which asked respondents to choose one of four statements that best reflected the nature of their experiences thus far (ranging from "no problems at all" to "nothing but problems"). The most striking result was that 85.5% selected a level-2 response (i.e., "I have had a few problems") or higher, indicating that 14.5% of teachers in this sample considered the experience thus far to be free of problems. Of all respondents, 15.2% reported having had "a great deal of problems" and 7.6 reported having had "nothing but problems".

Given the indication that the road to credentialing for emergency-permitted teachers typically is less than problem-free, the next step was to analyze the types of obstacles teachers typically would encounter. Respondents used a checklist to select items that corresponded to the types of difficulties they had had as well as an open-ended item allowing them to volunteer any obstacles encountered not named in the questionnaire. The most commonly reported obstacle was lack of time to complete university units (42.1% of respondents checked this item). It seems teachers were having a great deal of difficulty working full time as teachers while simultaneously taking the necessary steps to earn required university credits to keep their jobs, an idea that is reflected in many of the general comments made by teachers (discussed in more detail below). Second most commonly reported (and highly anticipated by program staff) was difficulty with taking and passing the examinations required for credentialing, such as the MSAT, SSAT, and other applicable tests (37.2%; also discussed in greater detail below). Table 1 shows the percentages of respondents who selected each of the items from the checklist.

A thematic analysis of the open-ended item responses revealed that the constraints placed on individuals having to attend school while teaching full time are found to be unbearable by a large number of teachers, particularly if they did not find the content of university courses as applicable to their work. For example, one respondent who had been teaching for 5 years stated that "it was very difficult to attend school (university) and teach mostly because of the lack of support. Many times [information] is given to you but difficult to supplement in the classroom." Also common were comments about the lack of usefulness of support systems currently in place. For example, one teacher

who had been teaching for four years offered the following: "The university has incompetent people and the district offices have incompetent people who will not answer the phone!" Medical and financial problems were also mentioned numerous times as examples of obstacles to attaining the credential in a timely manner.

Taking and passing credential exams. Given the emphasis placed on exam requirements in the Pre-Intern Program, a section of the instrument was designed to focus on the numbers of times respondents had taken either the SSAT or MSAT exam and whether or not they had passed. A quarter of secondary teacher respondents reported having taken and passed the SSAT exam, while 53% said they had not taken and passed it. The remaining 23% said that the question was not applicable to them. Of those who reported having passed the SSAT, most had only taken the exam once; a few teachers said they had taken the exam twice, and one teacher reported having taken it a third time before passing. Of those who said they had not yet passed the SSAT, most (83%) said they had not yet taken the exam. Four teachers said they had taken the exam once and three reported having taken the exam twice.

Equal numbers of elementary teachers in the sample reported having taken and passed the MSAT exam as those who said they had not yet passed it (36% in each category). Twenty-eight percent of elementary teachers said that the question was not applicable to them. Of those who said they had passed, 60% reported having taken the exam only once; the remaining teachers reported having taken the exam two or three times (one respondent reported having taken the exam for a fourth time). Of respondents who said they had not yet passed the MSAT, 63% said that they had not yet taken the exam. Of those who had reported having taken the exam, the number of times the exam

had been taken ranged from one to five times, the number of respondents reporting each being generally evenly distributed.

Improving support systems. As a potential help to staff in charge of modifying support systems to meet the needs of all non-credentialed teachers, the teachers in this sample were asked to volunteer the one type of support that they feel would benefit them the most in terms of reaching their goals to become credentialed. Most responses had to do with obtaining financial assistance or assistance with passing exams. Many other suggestions had to do with the need for consistent and available information about the requirements to complete credentials as well as mentorship for all new teachers regardless of programs for which they qualify. A respondent who had been teaching for two years suggested that the district provide "a manual for new teachers - one place with all the rules and information so you don't have to call or go to the district to have all questions answered." Another who had been teaching for three years said that "the district could provide on the job training for new teachers with an experienced teacher training and helping the new teachers, in and out of class."

Recommendations based on findings of needs assessment. The results of the questionnaire completed by 147 emergency-permitted teachers clearly indicate that teaching full time in the LAUSD while completing university requirements to obtain a teaching credential is a challenge to most. While most of the teachers in the sample expressed having come into the profession with high hopes and ready for any sort of challenge, most have found the dual challenge of becoming fully certified as a teacher while beginning to teach full time extremely difficult. Furthermore, being in the unique position of beginning to work in the field before completing educational programs has

allowed many teachers to reflect on the value of what they have learned in terms of application in the classroom. Many criticize the emphasis put on exams such as the MSAT, SSAT, and PRAXIS believing they don't validly differentiate among those who are and are not capable of teaching well. Others argue still that the difficulty of teaching full time while being in school in the evenings would not be nearly as difficult if information coming from the district and universities were consistent and readily available.

We recommend that district officials carefully examine the information that is made available to teachers coming into the district on emergency permits and judge its completeness. Officials should ask whether there exists a resource available to teachers that maps out the process of completing a credential while working with an emergency permit from start to finish. Such a resource could be in the form of a pamphlet available to all incoming teachers. Perhaps a one- or two-hour seminar outlining the process accompanied by a list of important phone number and web addresses could be provided, so that teachers feel certain of the requirements and how close they are to completing them. The ideal would be a place for incoming teachers to register so they could keep track of their progress in light of requirements clearly laid out by the district and relevant universities and regularly updated.

It is apparent also that awareness of the subject matter examinations' importance in the credentialing process is lacking among a significant number of teachers. Many teachers for whom one or the other of the subject mastery exams (SSAT and MSAT) are necessary indicated that the exam was not relevant to them. However, a noteworthy finding from the present study is that while many emergency-permitted teachers have not

yet passed the exam, most also have not yet taken them. This finding underscores the need to provide teachers entering the district on an emergency permit with a complete picture of the credentialing process from start to finish so they can better monitor their own progress. It also necessitates a more focused examination of how well teachers in this population understand how the exams fit into the larger scheme of credentialing.

The Next Phase of Research

Class Size. Efforts to address the research questions pertaining to the effectiveness of Federal Class Size Reduction are currently underway. Classroom observation data were collected in twenty middle schools across the district. In all, 60 eighth grade English classes and 10 middle school ESL classes were selected for observation. The data collected from these observations will be compiled and analyzed during the summer 2002. The classroom observation data will allow for an extensive analysis of the impact of class-size on the potential for student learning. Data were collected from 1) classrooms in four content areas, including language arts, math, science, and social studies; and 2) sixth, seventh, and eighth grade classrooms. This will allow for comparisons of classrooms that are class-size-restricted (i.e., eighth grade language arts) to those which are not (non-language arts content areas and sixth and seventh grade classrooms.

Observers are trained to focus on several dimensions during their observations of teacher-students interaction including quality of learning goal implementation, quality of alignment of classroom activities with learning goals, quality of feedback to students, and quality of classroom discussion. The latter dimension was developed recently by researchers at the UCLA's National Center for Research and Evaluation of Student

Standards and Testing (CRESST) to capture the extent to which teachers and students engage in a high quality discussion during their lessons. High quality is defined in terms of the degree to which students drive the discussion forward, ranging from discussion that is 100% teacher-driven to a true discussion: one that is driven as much by the students as by the teacher. This variable is of particular interest to a study having a class-size reduction focus, as the ability to utilize discussion as a tool in a classroom (i.e., bringing closure to topics and reaching a consensus on student ideas) theoretically decreases as class size increases (Mitchell & Beach, 1990). Analyses will compare classes of larger and smaller sizes on discussion quality and will take note of various ways in which discussions take place in the classroom (e.g., in a large classroom, teachers may limit their discussion to a cluster of students in the front of the room while leaving the majority of students out).

Also of interest will be comparisons of small and large classrooms on quality of instructional feedback and implementation of learning goals. Instructional feedback is defined in terms of information made available to the students that they can use to increase their learning in terms of the learning goals set forth by the teacher. Theoretically, it would become a greater challenge to make students aware of learning expectations, particularly on an individual level, in a larger classroom. Implementation is operationalized as the extent to which activities transition smoothly and the teacher is in control of the classroom at all times. Larger class sizes are expected to be associated with lower classroom implementation scores based on the notion that teachers decrease in effectiveness as classroom managers as class size increases (though the notion is derived

from data collected mainly from primary grade classrooms; Stecher & Bohrnstedt, 2000; Mitchell & Beach, 1990).

Non-credentialed teachers. Program officials in the Pre-Intern Program are currently examining the data collected in this evaluation as they plan to develop new programs to begin in the fall of 2002 to support emergency-permitted teachers. Of principal interest is the development of a mentor system parallel to the one used for pre-interns. Also of interest is increasing awareness among emergency-permitted teachers of resources that are currently available, such as seminars designed to help provide important information about credentialing exams (i.e., MSAT and SSAT). The next phases of research on this topic are likely to include a survey of emergency-permitted teachers that measures their awareness of resources available and their suggestions as far as methods that would be most valuable to them. Also underway is the development of follow-up measurement of emergency-permitted teachers who responded to the Fall 2001 survey and an examination of credentialed versus non-credentialed teachers in small and large classrooms using classroom observation data that will be available during the summer 2002.

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Table 1. Percentages of Respondents Reporting Issues as Barriers to Obtaining Credentials.

Percentage of Respondents	Type of Obstacle
12.4%	No problems at all.
37.2%	Difficulty taking/passing exams.
42.1%	Lack of time for university units.
19.3%	Family/relationship problems.
29.0%	Process is confusing/difficult to navigate.
14.5%	Unsure where to obtain necessary information.
11.0%	Don't know someone to whom to go for advice/guidance.
29.0%	Other reasons not listed.

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